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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000874

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SUBJECT: ERITREA SANCTIONS: UGANDA PUSHES P3 FOR IMMEDIATE
COUNCIL ACTION

Classified By: USUN AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE FOR REASONS 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (SBU) Guidance request - see para 11.

12. (C) SUMMARY. The P-3 and Uganda met to discuss possible sanctions on Eritrea. France agreed Council action is necessary; UK also agreed on the need to act, but starting with existing mechanisms, such as the Somalia sanctions regime (UNSCR 1844). In a subsequent meeting with the P-3, Uganda voiced strong support for an Eritrean sanctions regime that addresses both Eritrea's transgressions in Somalia and Djibouti. Uganda also urged swift Council action to adopt such measures in October and expressed confidence that an Eritrean sanctions resolution would pass the Council. USUN requests Washington assistance in assembling unclassified information that can be passed to the P-3 and Uganda regarding arms flows through Eritrea and options to target, through a UNSCR, an Eritrea-levied tax on remittances. END SUMMARY.

13. (C) During a UK hosted P-3 meeting on Eritrea sanctions on September 30, Ambassador DiCarlo reiterated U.S. interest in considering sanctions on Eritrea should Eritrea not change its behavior immediately. She stated that sanctions will only be saleable in the Council if it is an African-led initiative.

14. (C) France Deputy Perm Rep (DPR) de Reviere agreed that Council action is necessary to address the Eritrea/Djibouti border issue, but remains concerned over the French hostage held in Somalia. Despite this, he said, France would not block Council action and would support Uganda's lead.

15. (C) UK DPR Parham agreed that the existing Somalia sanctions regime (UNSCR 1844) is insufficient to deal with the current range of Eritrea's destabilizing actions. He said the UK's "starting point" is to use existing mechanisms, build pressure incrementally by designating the Eritrean leaders and possibly expanding the scope of 1844. Parham also agreed with the U.S. on the "scale of the problem" and the "need for action." He acknowledged that short of a political statement by the Council following designation of Eritrean officials, measures taken under 1844 cannot hold the Government of Eritrea accountable writ large (such as through an arms embargo). In response to Ambassador DiCarlo's question about the nature of the UK's hesitation, he said that the UK is concerned about, "what is saleable in the Security Council," and amount of political capital the UK is willing to expend. The UK DPR also suggested to Ambassador DiCarlo that the P-3 should begin using 1844 to its fullest, even if a separate Eritrea

sanctions regime is established. Ambassador DiCarlo reminded the UK and France and that the U.S. is waiting for reactions to U.S. proposed designations under 1844 and urged them to work expeditiously to designate prior to the Council's scheduled review of 1844 in November.

¶16. (C) Ugandan Perm Rep Rugunda then joined the P-3 meeting and emphasized the need for a new sanctions regime for Eritrea. He stated that Uganda will only support a resolution that encompasses Eritrea's transgressions in both Somalia and Djibouti. Rugunda reported that Uganda has met with all Council members on this issue and found consensus that the Council should take action. According to Rugunda, China is cautious about an Eritrea sanctions regime but is not unsupportive. China requested that the Ugandans share elements of a draft resolution for Beijing's feedback. According to Rugunda, Russia is also cautious but agrees that the Council must act. Russia expressed concern over Uganda's support for a port blockade on Eritrea, stating that the UN lacks forces to implement such a measure. Rugunda told the P-3 that Libya will not oppose measures despite its reticence over sanctions on African countries. He explained that the African Union (AU), under Libya's leadership, officially endorsed Eritrea sanctions. Therefore, he asserted, it would be difficult for Libya to contradict the AU policy in the Council. According to Rugunda, Libya will "likely" support measures or may

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abstain, but will not block a resolution.

¶17. (C) When asked by the UK about using 1844 instead of a new regime, Rugunda answered that he did not believe using existing measures sends a strong enough message. However, Rugunda stated that Uganda is not "dogmatic" over the mechanism and is willing to discuss the idea of expanding the scope of 1844 as long as the outcome holds Eritrea accountable and sends a clear message to the region that spoilers will not be tolerated. Rugunda expressed concern that Somalia is becoming a safe haven for terror groups.

¶18. Regarding Djibouti, Rugunda called Eritrea's defiance of the Council and non-compliance with UNSCR 1862 "embarrassing" and a threat to the Council's "moral authority." Parham asked Rugunda how the Council will respond to Eritrea's likely criticism that the Council is acting with hypocrisy by punishing Eritrea for troops in Djibouti while not speaking out against Ethiopia's presence in Eritrea. Rugunda answered that Eritrea has "distinguished itself" as a leader in destabilizing the region and the Council is not obligated to deal with all border disputes at all times.

¶19. (SBU) Rugunda listed some sanctions measures Uganda supports against Eritrea: measures holding Eritrean leaders and entities responsible for funding or acting as a conduit for funding foreign fighters; an arms import and export embargo (noting that Eritrea does not produce its own arms but acts as a conduit for arms flow to neighboring countries); measures curbing fundraising for Eritrea in other parts of the world; blockades that target key Eritrean and Somali ports that facilitate entry of arms and foreign fighters into Somalia; curtailment of the 2% remittance Eritrea uses, in part, to raise funds for armed insurgent groups; and other targeted measures. Rugunda told the P-3 that Uganda will not endorse measures that hurt the Eritrean people. Uganda wants "effective measures" that will target specific government entities and not "kill institutions."

¶10. (SBU) The group agreed to reconvene in one week

following consultations on the expert level to discuss options for Council action. Finally, the group agreed to take a closer look at an arms embargo to identify the major suppliers of arms and how arms and cash assistance can be cut off.

Action Request

¶11. (SBU) USUN requests Department assistance in providing data releasable to the P-3 and Uganda detailing:
1) arms suppliers and the flow of funds and arms to Eritrea;
and 2) options on targeting the 2% remittance tax through a UNSCR.
Additional, pertinent information is also welcomed.
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